



SeafoodTrade Strategy - NOAA Service Account <seafoodtrade.strategy@noaa.gov>

Comments on Seafood Trade TaskForce

1 message

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Sat, Aug 1, 2020 at 9:21 PM

To: seafoodtrade.strategy@noaa.gov, morgan.corey@noaa.gov, Andrew Lawler - NOAA Federal <andrew.lawler@noaa.gov>

July 31, 2020

TO WHOM THIS MAY CONCERN:

I applaud President Trumps call to strengthen America's fisheries. This has been a no-brainer for decades, and we in the fishing industry have seen the fall of the U.S. dominance over tuna over the last 2 decades. Thirty years ago, the U.S. dominated commercial fisheries including tuna in the Pacific Ocean. Now, the U.S. has a tiny voice as boat owners but has a huge demand from our U.S. consumers and so the U.S. has a large seafood deficit. Sadly, high government officials in charge of managing U.S. fisheries have watched the decline of U.S. fisheries over the years, and they let it happen without any effort to support or sustain U.S. commercial fisheries so that we don't see a seafood deficit and we don't face an issue of food security domestically for seafood. The U.S. fishermen and boat owners are the most regulated in the entire world; yet the U.S. government has prioritized enforcement of regulations and coming up with more and more regulations against the U.S. fishermen to appease any and all claims against fishing in general. Moreover, the U.S. government has used the various "fisheries" management discussions as a tool or opportunities for broader diplomatic agreements with other countries even if it is not beneficial to our U.S. fishermen/ U.S. boat owners. The South Pacific is a great example of how the U.S. has lost its place as a key player not only in tropical tuna but also south pacific albacore. There are only a handful of U.S. fishermen left in those fisheries, and it is now dominated by China on the high seas and China in the EEZs of the many island countries. Despite our pleas for attention to the NMFS and also the US Commissioners to the WCPFC which include the Department of State, we were crying to deaf officials as they just turned a blind eye maybe because this region is too far away from Washington DC. Recently, one of our U.S. flagged longliners was boarded by 3 different foreign patrol boats inside the U.S. EEZ. This was reported to NMFS and Mr. Drew Lawler and the Dept of State. These foreign patrol officers boarded a U.S. flagged fishing boat, demanded to review all the catch onboard, treated our crew as if they were criminals inside our own EEZ. The U.S. Government, NMFS, Drew Lawler, Dept of State did nothing to bring justice to this matter. If this scenario was different and it was the other way around where my boat was caught inside the neighbor island EEZ, the U.S. Government would come down hard on us to pay fees of violations and probably seize my boat and my catches. Again, the U.S. fishermen and boats are being used as pawns in the larger diplomatic games that the U.S. government is trying to play in our region.

Again, it is about time that a President pays attention to the crime of letting the U.S. fishermen die off, and I hope now we will have some kind of support to sustain our fisheries. If this task force is created just for the record to show that something was done, then I know that no support is coming our way and this is just for show. I am a staunch President Trump supporter, because I believe in America First. Unfortunately in commercial fisheries, America is not first to the U.S. government.

Very sincerely,

Carlos M. Sanchez

President, Longline Services, Inc.